

# **Standing Orders of Union Council**

## **Standing Order 1 (Nature of the Standing Orders)**

1. The rules in these Orders are binding on all present at meetings of Council and, where appropriate, its sub-committees, as set out in their own standing orders.
2. In the event of dispute, the initial interpretation of these Standing Orders shall be made by the Council Chair, whose decision may be challenged under SO13.

## **Standing Order 2 (Voting)**

1. Votes shall be taken on Council business where a decision has not been reached by consensus.
2. Votes on Procedural Motions and votes to accept the minutes of a previous meeting may be taken by a show of hands.
3. Matters for Decision and votes on amendments to items must be taken electronically, or otherwise in such a way that individual Members' votes may be recorded.
4. Individual Members' votes, where recorded, must be made available to members of the Union, unless Council has resolved by simple majority that a vote shall be secret.

## **Standing Order 3 (Order of Business)**

1. The first order of business shall be the Chair's Business, which shall include approval of the previous Meeting's minutes, notices of removal of Members for lack of attendance in line with SO21, approval of transfers of voting powers in line with SO19, any minor proposed amendments to these Standing Orders, reports from the Chair on Board of Trustees business, and any matters arising from the previous Meeting.
2. Following this shall be any presentations to be made to Council.
3. Matters for Decision shall include any Business submitted under SO5.1, any proposed amendments to the Union's Constitution and Bye-Laws, and any Motions of Censure or No Confidence to be heard.
4. Matters for Discussion shall include any Business submitted under SO5.2.
5. Reports shall include any reports from Officers, Committees, Constituent Unions and other relevant persons and bodies as appropriate and as set out in SO4.
6. Where time permits, at the end of the Agenda there will be an opportunity (Any Other Business) for Members to raise matters arising from discussions during the meeting and informally raise any

issues they feel Council should be aware of but which do not warrant a formal paper.

#### **Standing Order 4 (Reports)**

1. Council may request that any Officer of the Union attend a Meeting and present a report.
2. Reports may be a general overview of the Officer's activities or specific to a particular topic.
3. Standing Reports to Council are outlined in Appendix A.

#### **Standing Order 5 (Notice of Business)**

1. Matters for Decision:
  - a. Any new Business which is a Matter for Decision must be submitted by 5pm, 6 clear College days before the meeting.
  - b. Papers written as a direct response to another proposed Matter for Decision may be submitted after this deadline, at the discretion of the Chair.
2. Matters for Discussion:
  - a. Matters for Discussion must be submitted to the Chair by 5pm, 6 clear College days before the meeting, unless in the Chair's view, the matter is of a time-sensitive nature and could not have reasonably been submitted prior to the deadline.
3. The Chair shall put all valid Business submitted prior to the deadlines above onto the Agenda for the Meeting unless it is withdrawn prior to the distribution of the Agenda.

#### **Standing Order 6 (Motions which may be Moved without Notice)**

1. Procedural Motions may be tabled in the course of debate without notice and without needing to be seconded.
  - a. Such motions shall not be open for debate unless the Chair opens them to the floor.
2. Motions to amend an item, as per SO8, may be called to a vote in the course of debate without notice provided they are seconded by at least one other Member.
3. Business presented as 'Any Other Business' may be presented without notice.
4. The Chair may at their discretion dismiss any such motion.

#### **Standing Order 7 (Withdrawal of Business)**

1. Any item of Business may be withdrawn by the person who proposed it by informing the Chair either verbally or in writing, prior to the item being put to a final vote.

### **Standing Order 8 (Amendments to Business)**

1. No amendment to any item under discussion will be allowed which is not related to the issue(s) the paper is intended to deal with.
2. Amendments proposed during the meeting may be adopted either by the proposer of the paper accepting the suggestion or by simple majority vote of Council

### **Standing Order 9 (Rules of Debate)**

1. Members should refrain from speaking unless called to do so by the Chair, or unless the Member is challenging the ruling of the Chair.
2. It shall be out of order to shout over the current speaker recognised by the Chair.
3. The Proposer of any Business (or a named Secunder if the Proposer is not present) shall be given the first and last opportunities to speak on the matter.
  - a. Equal time shall be afforded to those wishing to speak against the proposal

### **Standing Order 10 (Structure of Papers)**

1. The names of the proposer, and one or more seconders, shall be listed at the top of a paper.
2. If the Paper is to be a Matter for Decision, it must consist of three sections:
  - a. Union Notes: Factual and verifiable information which is relevant to the matter at hand, and which is referenced where possible.
  - b. Union Believes: Positions and/or interpretations of facts the proposer wishes the Union to take on the subject at hand.
  - c. Union Resolves: Details of any actions the Union shall be mandated to carry out on the passing of the Paper.
3. Additionally, if the Paper contains a proposal requiring the attention of the Board of Trustees or a request for an elected official to present a report, a fourth section may be:
  - a. Union Requests: Details of any requests for the Board of Trustees to consider and requests for reports from elected officials.

### **Standing Order 11 (Limits on Length of Meetings)**

1. The meeting shall be deemed to have run to its maximum length when 2 hours have elapsed from the advertised start time.

2. A Meeting may be extended if, when the time limit has been reached, a Procedural Motion to that end is passed by a simple majority of Council.

### **Standing Order 12 (Email Votes)**

1. Time sensitive matters, and ratification of the business of a previous inquorate meeting, may be decided by email vote at the discretion of the chair.
2. All email votes must achieve quorum in order to be valid.

### **Standing Order 13 (Challenging the Chair)**

1. Any decision by the Chair may be overturned via a simple majority vote of Council. This shall be treated as a Procedural Motion that cannot be dismissed by the Chair.

### **Standing Order 14 (Disorderly Conduct)**

1. Disorderly conduct includes:
  - a. Persistently disregarding the ruling of the Chair
  - b. Behaving irregularly or offensively
  - c. Willfully obstructing the business of Council
  - d. Otherwise proving a disruption to the orderly conduct of the meeting
2. A Member engaged in disorderly conduct may be no longer called to speak at the meeting, or required to leave the meeting, at the discretion of the Chair.

### **Standing Order 15 (Adjournment of Meetings)**

1. The Chair may at any point declare the meeting adjourned, after which no further business may be transacted unless the decision to adjourn is challenged under SO13.

### **Standing Order 16 (Powers of Council)**

1. Powers of Council include, but are not limited to resolving to:
  - a. Create or dissolve a temporary working group or permanent subcommittee of Council, and determine the membership and standing orders of this body.
  - b. Action an Officer of the Union to perform a certain task or duty that is within the remit of their role, as interpreted by the Chair.
  - c. Delegate decision-making powers to a subcommittee.
  - d. Create, amend, or annul Union Policy.

### **Standing Order 17 (Implementation of Council Resolutions)**

1. The Chair shall be responsible for ensuring that Council resolutions are implemented by:
  - a. Communicating Requests of Council to the relevant Officer or the Board of Trustees.
  - b. Ensuring that new or amended Union Policies are published and that any individuals to whom they are relevant are made aware of them.
  - c. Keeping track of actions made on Officers and obtaining updates on their status.

### **Standing Order 18 (Absence of the Chair)**

1. If the elected Council Chair is not present at a Meeting, or has relinquished the Chair temporarily due to a perceived or actual conflict of interest, Council shall select from amongst itself an Acting Chair, who shall Chair the meeting for such time until the Chair returns.
2. Voting in an election for an Acting Chair shall be held in accordance with the procedures in SO2.
3. Council may not be chaired by a current Officer Trustee.

### **Standing Order 19 (Proxies)**

- ~~1. Proxy voting is not allowed at Council; Members cannot delegate their vote in Council to any other person and must exercise it themselves.~~Members may delegate their vote in Council, temporarily or permanently, to another person in an elected Union role who is similarly qualified to represent their constituency, and who is not already a Member of Council.
- Council will formally approve any such requests by simple majority vote under Chair's Business, so long as Council is satisfied that the proxy is a "similarly qualified" person.
- Representatives to Council, Officer Trustees, the Council Chair, and Constituent Union Presidents may not proxy their vote under this Standing Order.
- Council may at any time annul the proxy arrangement by simple majority vote, in which case the voting rights shall return to the original holder of those rights.

### **Standing Order 20 (Shared Positions)**

1. As per Union Bye-Laws A.1.6 and A.1.7 each Constituent Union has one Council seat each for their Welfare Officer and their Academic Affairs Officer, however each Constituent Union may have more than one Welfare Officer and may have more than one Academic Affairs Officer. Where this is the case, Constituent Unions may delegate one Welfare Officer and one Academic Affairs Officer to be

the voting representative at a given meeting. This need not be the same person every meeting.

### **Standing Order 21 (Notice of Removal of Members for Lack of Attendance)**

1. Where any Member of Council has not attended Council for the previous two Ordinary Meetings they shall be deemed to have resigned their seat in line with Union Bye-Law A.3. This shall be recorded in the minutes of the Meeting.
2. The Council Chair shall notify Members when their non-attendance of the next Council meeting will result in automatic resignation.

### **Standing Order 22 (Ultra Vires)**

1. Council may not make any Policy which is not relevant to the Union's charitable objectives, or which contradicts the Policies of the Board of Trustees or the Constitution or Bye-Laws.

### **Standing Order 23 (Subcommittees)**

1. The standing subcommittees of Council are listed with their Standing Orders in Appendix B.
2. All Council subcommittees are Union Meetings as per section C of the Bye Laws, and as such must be minuted.
3. All Members of Council may attend meetings of any Council subcommittee, except where the meeting deals with sensitive information, at the discretion of the subcommittee's chair.

### **Definitions:**

Procedural Motion: Motions including:

- Motion that the matter under discussion be immediately put to a vote
- Motion that a time limit be set for debate on the current matter
- Motion that debate be suspended on the current item of Business and continued at the next Meeting of Council
- Motion that the Meeting be extended.

Matter for Decision: Any Motion calling on Council to discuss an issue with the intention of forming and voting upon a decision.

Matter for Discussion: A Motion for which the view's of Council are sought on a particular issue, but Council is not requested to form a decision.

Member: A Union Officer entitled to vote at Council, as defined by the Union Bye Laws.

